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SMALL WATERSHED PROJECTS IN HAWAII

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WATER

Water helps maintain
Hawaii's productive beauty

By definition, a watershed is an area from which water running off the land drains into a common stream system. But to the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service (SCS) and others who seek answers to watershed problems, a watershed is more than a piece of land. It includes people, homes, businesses, recreation areas, water supplies and other surrounding water and land resources.

It's obvious that water may be friend or enemy. Hawaii's gentle showers produce drinking water, help grow food and provide water for recreation. But the state's heavy rainstorms also gully land, ruin crops pollute water and damage homes and other property. Flood waters also take lives.

Small watersheds in Hawaii are being improved under the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (Public Law 566). Projects are sponsored by local soil and water conservation districts, and by state and county agencies. Public Law 566 is administered by the Soil Conservation Service in cooperation with other agencies.

A recent study, called the Conservation Needs Inventory, lists 95 watersheds covering just over four million acres in Hawaii. Of these, 88 were judged in need of project action of some type, and 28 were felt to be the type which would qualify for help under Public Law 566.

A watershed project which is approved for Public Law 566 action is authorized federal funds for engineering work, varying percentages of construction work and other work connected with the project. Land treatment measures applied by farmers and ranchers are an important part of a watershed project.

For more information about how small watershed projects can help your community, contact the local soil and water conservation district office or Soil Conservation Service office.



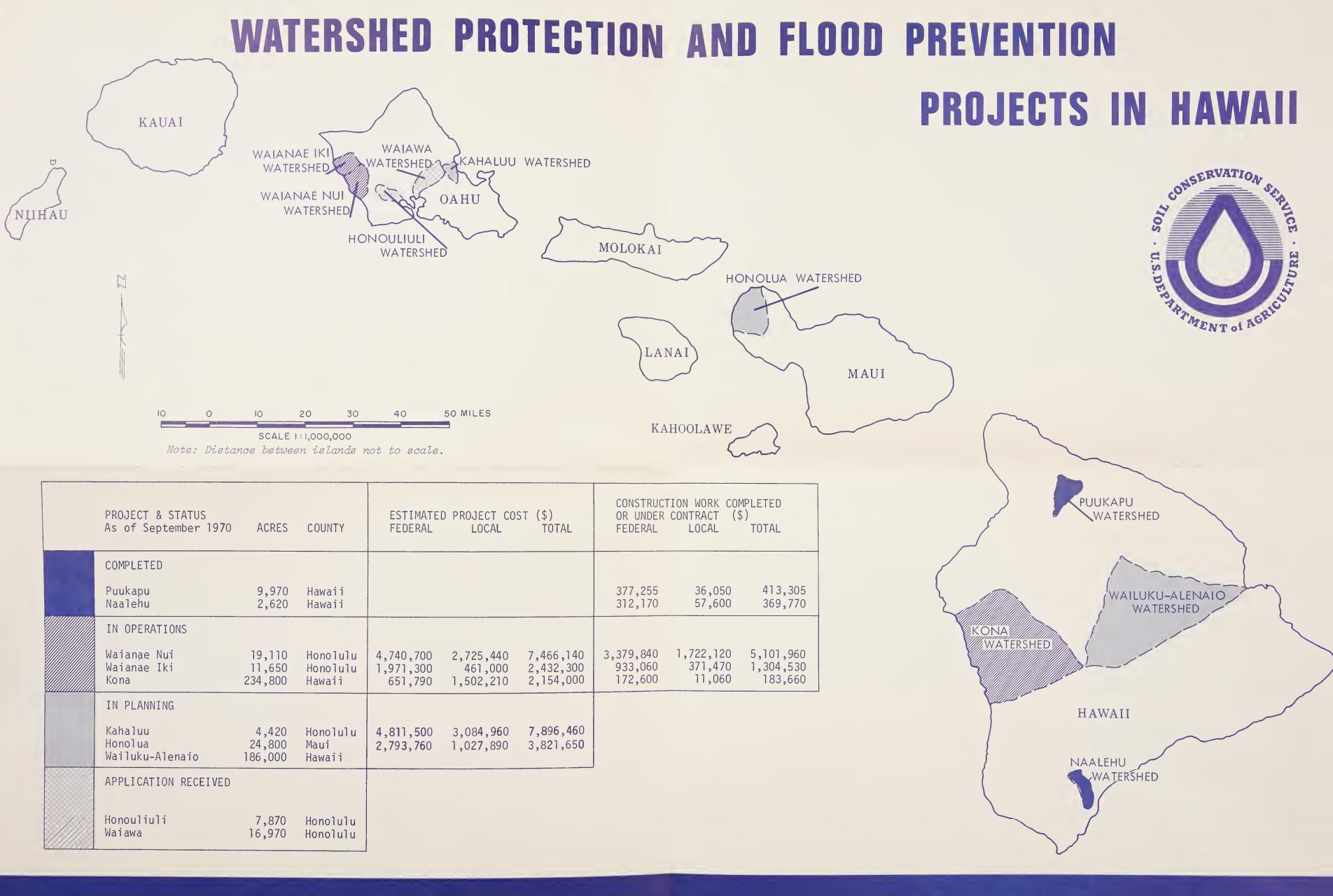




Unchecked floodwaters bring destruction to urban and rural areas (at left). Small watershed project work can end this threat (above).

FRIEND AND FOE





P.L. 566 PROJECTS: Local People Start Them...Local People Make Them Go

The State's First Watershed Project







The success of Hawaii's first small watershed project is a favorable example for the 10 other projects in various stages throughout the state.

Moving toward completion called for a number of important steps, including: West Oahu Soil and Water Conservation District and city and county leaders (top left) sign the project agreement; Soil Conservation Service employees (left) are called on to explain technical aspects at public meetings; construction (top right) work begins; and when structures are finished (right) and land treatment measures applied, the community reaps the benefits of a flood problem solved.

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